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The Holy Family

School of Fra Filippino Lippi

(Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art)

The Holy Cross Magazine

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1952

The Beginning and the End

BY JEAN LOGGIE

A COLD wind filled the valley throwing the stinging sand against his face. His large bare hands were stiff and numb, one holding the bridle, the other supporting his wife on the back of Kiki, the white monkey. An hour or so before, when the night had settled upon them, he had wrapped his cloak around her.

"We will soon be there, Mary," he said. "You must not take a chill. I am strong and walking will warm me." But he was not warm and his feet moved wearily on the long road.

He dared not pause. A silent prayer that they would reach their destination in time beat upon his mind. There was no shelter for them among the rocks and rolling hills, no alternative but that they keep going. He would glance anxiously at Mary's face, pale in the starlight, drooping with a weariness even greater than his own. Now and then a shadow fell across her features, pulling at the corners of her mouth and her breath would sob lightly in her nostrils. Beneath the cloak her elbows hugged her sides and he could see that her small hands were clasped.

Undoubtedly they had but little time. He estimated how far they had come, how much further they must go. The night obliterated land marks, but soon they must come to that rise in the road that looked down upon Bethlehem. How untimely was their journey.

Faintly he could hear the plaintive bleating of sheep. Somewhere above them flocks must be resting in the shelter of caves, but there was no visible sign of them, even in the bright starlight. It seemed to him that he had never seen the stars as bright.

Mary's eyes were wide open now, they were dark in her waxen face, but he knew that their color was like the blue of a spring sky. Her thin woolen veil had slipped back and he reached up and straightened it, smoothing back a strand of her reddish hair as gently as his stiffened fingers could manage.

"Will we soon be there, Joseph?" she asked in a whisper.

"Soon," he promised and she gave him a grateful smile. Her patience wrung his heart, but inarticulate, he could only try to

support her more comfortably, knowing how uncomfortable she must be.

He blessed the little donkey which had given no signs of weakening. Soon there would be rest, a place to lay their heads. And if there were no rest, at least they would not have to walk. Then the road began to rise and he peered ahead. Surely this was the place he had been looking for. He recognized the stump of an old fig tree and the twin boulders that marked a little spring. A half hour at the most would bring them to the village. And then they were over the rise of ground and the white walls and bonfires shone below them in the shadows.

* * *

The village was wide awake. Men moved in and out of doorways or warmed themselves at the fires. Animals, tethered, munched in their feedbags. Mounds of luggage, on which sprawled sleeping children, were piled on the ground. There was a hubbub of voices, deep with narrative, and behind the walls, the higher tones of women and the crying of babies.

Joseph, his arm around his wife's waist, moved slowly down the street. It was impossible to recognize a familiar face. True, he had been born here, but his parents had left the village in his early childhood. Thirty years had passed and his father's kinsmen were long since dead. There was an inn, he remembered, for those who could afford lodgings. Most travellers slept on the ground on their cloaks in warm weather, or within the courtyard of some hospitable villager.

Joseph spoke first to one householder and then the next and each replied, "Ah, no. We have more than we can care for as it is. Try further on. Perhaps Mola the Innkeeper yet has a bed."

His hopes were lost when he saw the

crowd around the innkeeper. Joseph remembered this man Mola, a thick necked, curly haired fellow, fat with good living and shrewd bargains. He stood now with hands and eyes raised to the sky, as though he prayed to be delivered from prosperity. He grumbled hoarsely, paying no attention to the hands that caught at his sleeves and the back of his coat.

Joseph edged nearer until he stood beside him and the urgency of his need seemed to penetrate the innkeeper's callousness. Mola turned and looked at him.

"My wife," said Joseph, "My wife is very tired and soon to be delivered of a child. She must have a bed. Perhaps you have some corner where she may lie sheltered from the cold?"

Mola's eyes flicked past him, his brows moved appraisingly. "A fair flower of Israel." He shrugged, "Alas, my every corner is filled. Business has never been so good. Try elsewhere, someone must have a bundle of straw."

"I will pay you," said Joseph desperately, his fingers on the few silver coins in his girdle.

"Of course," said Mola indifferently, "but I have no place." He looked toward the distance, interest suddenly rising in his eyes. A heads moved at some increase in the tempo of confusion. Camels with riders and camel laden with packs forced the crowds back into the evil ditches as they surged through the street like the billows of the sea.

"Holy Abraham," muttered Mola, "it is the caravan of Ahmed the Trader. What will I do with them?" But he stepped forward, wide smile creasing his face, to greet the rider of the great lead camel. And above the noises of the street came the sound of wild screaming.

There was no smile on the face of Ahmed the Trader. His mouth twitched above his beard and his eyes were haggard. He jumped from his kneeling camel, "Be quick," he shouted to the innkeeper, "your bedrooms and some people to care for my wife. She is soon to be delivered of a child. Something is wrong and these stupid women do not know how to help her."

He strode to a palanquin hung with en-



roidered curtains which rested on the ground between two camels. His men and slaves hovered anxiously as he drew the curtain back and the moans of the woman beat against their ears. He lifted her from the cushions and the crowd caught a glimpse of the pain streaked face of a girl, streaming hair like fine gold silk and a veil of thin gauze that trailed on the ground behind the trader prince.

It was as though the whole village had congregated in the courtyard of the inn. The fires were piled with new logs, the servants of the inn and the servants and slaves of the trader hurried back and forth, unloading the camels, carrying bundles, preparing food. The night swelled with a babble of voices and Joseph and Mary and Kiki, the donkey, were pushed back by the street wall, no one paying them the slightest attention.

Joseph stood silently beside his wife, he was cradling her in his arms and her head rested upon his shoulder. The little donkey sighed and crossed his front feet patiently. Joseph watched the scene before him and a fierce resentment burned in him. He thrust it away but he could not rid himself of the conviction that he was but half a man. He could not even provide a bed for his wife in her time of travail. The few silver pieces, which besides the tax money were all he possessed, bore witness to the little return he had to show for his years at the carpenter's bench. The cow, the chickens, the small house furnished by his own craftsmanship, meant nothing when he must assert his power over disaster. His personality and pocketbook had failed the wife who trusted him. It was a bitter thought and something like panic came over him.

She must have sensed his mood for she whispered, "Don't worry, Joseph," she rested her head once more upon his shoulder, "ask the innkeeper again. He might think of some place for us."

Joseph looked at her tenderly. He blessed her and his confidence returned to him. "I will make him think of a place," he cried loud. And Mola the Innkeeper appeared in the courtyard, a skin of wine in each hand.

"The bounty of Ahmed the Trader," he



shouted passing them to two servants, "see that each gets his share." He turned away.

"Wait," called Joseph above the jubilant crowd. He pressed forward, nearly lifting the white donkey from its feet.

"You again!" Mola frowned but he was not angry. The prospect of his profits was too warm for any chill to generate in him at that moment.

"There must be some place, some quiet corner for us," Joseph told him. "Have you no loft or outhouse where you could lodge us?"

Mola pulled his black brows down to his nose. "I have a stable," he said suddenly, "but it is very nearly burned out. Still, you might find it warmer than the ground and it will give your wife a little privacy."

"We will take it," said Joseph in triumph.

"It will cost you five farthings apiece," Mola snapped at the deal, "you will find some straw left. We beat out the flames before it was all destroyed."

"What about a fire to warm us?" Joseph bargained.

"For another five farthings I will give you wood and some skins for your wife's bed," Mola agreed with a lavish gesture.

"What about food? She needs something hot," Joseph persisted.

"Food also," the innkeeper grumbled, "by Abraham, you drive a hard bargain."

"The innkeeper provides for his guests," said Joseph firmly, "we may have to stay for several days."

Mola's patience reached its limit, "Through the courtyard and down the path to the edge of the hill." He pointed, "Ask the mute to guide you."

Joseph saw a small female in a ragged

robe struggling with some wood near one of the bonfires. Her age was indefinite and she was thin and starved looking. At first he thought her half-witted as she peered out at him from behind her matted locks of hair. But her manner was gentle and he explained carefully what he wanted. "My wife is soon to have a child," he finished, "will you help us?"

She looked closely at the young face that lay against Joseph's shoulder and its loveliness pleased her. Her hand stole out and she touched Mary's cheek very softly. At that moment the screams of the trader's wife rang from the upper windows and the mute recollected herself. She beckoned to Joseph and led the way through the gate.

* * *

An hour later Joseph sank down on the floor of the stable and thankfully reached for a bowl of warm broth. A fire burned on the blackened earth nearby and its heat caressed the chill exhaustion in his body. He thought sardonically that only Mola the shrewd would have had the effrontery to drive a bargain for this lodging. It was but the remains of three walls with a few charred boards overhead. One end of the building had been burned away, but the remaining framework did stand between them and the wind. Through the gaps in the roof the night was alive with brilliance.

They had made a thick platform of straw where the shelter was best and covered it

with a pile of skins, which the servant had stolen from her master. She had folded them around Mary and then hurried away for more wood and the food. She had included a small pitcher of wine.

A drowsiness stole over Joseph and he leaned back against a beam which had supported the roof. Mary's eyes were closed yet he knew that she was not asleep. So far, no complaint had come from her lips, but he felt that her time must be close. He marvelled at her courage. He listened to the shriek of the trader's wife as they floated down on the wind, the whole village must be aware of her sufferings.

The mute crept back and forth between the inn and the stable. She seemed to have entered into a silent communion with the girl on the stable floor and Mary accepted her ministrations gratefully. Joseph awakened as she appeared, dragging a large kettle of hot water which she placed near the fire to keep warm. He sighed in relief. Women knew their own business.

He stirred once again, roused by a distant climactic screaming, and soon the servant reappeared. She made a movement as though cradling a baby in her arms and a gesture which Joseph interpreted to mean that Ahmed the Trader was the father of a son.

He slept, although he was conscious of the brightness of light against his eyelids. The mute must have piled the wood so high that the stable seemed filled with daylight. He hoped driftingly that Mola's anger would not fall upon her for extravagance. The flames cast a presence around them. Vibrations, as from a host of unseen power and splendor, seemed to throb in the light. He felt that he should be on his feet helping taking part in some triumphal activity, but exhaustion held him prisoner.

"Call me if you need me," he murmured and his dreams stole over him and he smiled. There came music in his ears. He slept in music like that of the temple, the ringing joy of the psalmists magnifying the Lord, the ancient songs which chimed like silver bells.

He was roused by a sound which he took



be that of a young lamb, a gentle sound, wildly insistent. He wondered that a young lamb should be about on a cold night and an image of shepherds and flocks played in his mind.

He opened his eyes, gazing upward through the roof and for a long time he stared, hypnotized by the brilliance of the light that poured down upon him. He could not think but was conscious only of a prismatic shimmering that held his eyes transfixed. Could it be a star or some manifestation of his dream-filled mind? He wanted to cry with joy at the sight of such beauty. A star? He tried to remember the lore of the heavens, but this was beyond his comprehension.

The sound like a lamb came once more. Joseph sat up and looked about in the firelight. It shone upon his wife reclining among the skins. Her hair framed her face and she gave him a smile of the purest happiness. In the curve of her arm rested a small swaddled bundle.

He was trembling as he looked down, first at her and then at the child on her arm. An almost unearthly light hovered over them and he closed his eyes to clear them of the tears that welled with sweetness across his vision. He saw a tiny face, the image of Mary's, he thought in that first incredulous moment. It was moulded with the same waxen perfection that was hers. The cheeks were round and the nose sculptured in miniature, with finely arched nostrils above the small curving lips. Shadows of eyebrows and lashes lay above the closed eyelids and he could see fine down on the rounded forehead, where the white linen touched the like skin. The baby slept.

Joseph sank down on his knees and he realized fleetingly that he had never really looked at a baby before. And as he looked at this child he was conscious that all the beauty and all the promise and all the wonder of creation was before him. He wanted to kneel there forever and weep and gaze and pray and give thanks to the Lord.

* * *

The noises of the inn and the village had all settled into silence, which was unbroken



except for the occasional bark of a dog and the sighing of the wind. The mother and child slept peacefully on their bed of skins and Joseph sat beside them, his deep-set eyes brooding upon the fire and the distances of the night. From time to time he would add another piece of wood, stretching his limbs, which were still heavy with weariness, although sleep seemed to have eluded him.

He was beginning to feel the onset of middle-age, he supposed. His muscles were no longer elastic with the young vigor which had once enabled him to throw away tiredness with a few hours relaxation. His carpenter's bench did nothing to keep his body fit and he thought longingly of a less tedious life. He would like to have time to see something of the child, to watch the miracle of his growth.

He smiled at the idea of leisure, knowing that his only satisfactions would be inner ones. The joy of fulfilling his trust in providing for his wife and her child and the brief companionship they might share when his hours of work were done. He had resigned himself to outward things, and it was only in his dreams that he caught some measure of the greater purpose that moved beyond his understanding, but not beyond his appreciation. In love he would serve those who must be served, and he asked for little else.

For some time he had been watching a patch of mist which spread below him. In the starlight it was like an undulating cloud, faint and unreal. He was puzzled that mist should be rising at this hour and temperature and he strained his eyes to

look more closely through the silhouettes of the olive trees that sloped on Mola's hillside.

Then he heard the bleating of sheep and realized that the white mist was really a flock moving slowly up the valley. He could hear the dogs that guarded them and, now and then, made out the darker shadows of the shepherds. He had often wished that he might have been a shepherd. In the hot summer nights, when his back had ached from bending over his bench, he had thought of the shepherds lying cool on some green hillside, the clear music of their pipes marking the grazing flocks.

He wondered what had brought them



from their caves in the hours of darkness and decided that perhaps they sought some distant pasture for the sparse grass. They appeared to be approaching the hillside he overlooked. After a few minutes he could see that the shepherds had separated themselves from the flock, leaving the dogs on guard, and were walking, with their slow feet firm on the earth, in the direction of the stable. They were great shadows of men, even at a distance, heavy in their cold-weather garments and flowing hair. Their staffs struck the ground with each step they took.

He was conscious that they watched him, seated by the fire, even as he watched them and finally they paused a few paces away. One who seemed the leader, he was the largest and a silver pipe glinted at his girdle, stepped forward. He looked searchingly at Joseph, observing the burned out stable,

the tethered donkey, their little pile of belongings, and the shadows where Mary slept upon the pile of skins, her baby in the protecting curve of her arm.

He bowed with awkward dignity, his dark hair swinging across his face, like a tree and branches bending in the wind. By the firelight Joseph could see that his eyes were honest and wide, like a sky washed green with rain. He carried a bundle.

"A child has been born?" he asked a question but it was as though he stated a fact already known.

Joseph rose to his feet. "That is so," he admitted with surprise. He gestured hesitantly toward Mary.

The shepherd's weathered face scarcely changed expression, but a great joy came into his eyes. He stepped quietly into the shelter and, near Mary's feet, he slowly bent his knees until his great haunches rested on his heels. He looked with rapture at the mother and child, his hands clasped before him. Joseph moved out of the way and the other shepherds crept forward and knelt behind their leader.

Mary's eyes opened. She smiled a silent acknowledgement, as though greeting old friends, and then she, too, gazed upon the sleeping child with the calm regard that was her usual expression.

Joseph stood fascinated. It was as if they were pilgrims before some holy thing. His memory of his dreams kindled in his mind and his thoughts became still with the recollection. Then he, too, knelt, trembling once again with the wonder that he felt.

How long the silent shepherds watched Joseph could not have said, but finally they stirred and the leader rose to his feet. He placed the bundle that he carried beside the bed and, one by one, the others did the same. Then backed slowly from the stable. Joseph followed them.

"Thank you," he said and knew that there was no need to have spoken.

The leader nodded. Once more his grey eyes searched Joseph. They might have stood contemplating each other for an indefinite

ne, for neither gaze fell before the other. Curiosity pricked Joseph, "How did you know?"

The shepherd lifted his head toward the sky above them, "It is there," he replied. The light of the heavens reflected in his eyes. His voice was awed, "It is like a jewel chosen from the forehead of Jehovah. And to us the Host have proclaimed peace and joy. . . ."

Joseph scarcely breathed, the tears rolled on his cheeks, "Can this thing be true?"

The shepherd regarded him broodingly, "You know that it is," he said simply, "the beginning and the end of all truth. . . ."

He might have spoken further, but the moment was broken by the long drawn-out sound of wailing from somewhere in the distance, a keening sorrow that came through the night like an echo from some other world. It rose and fell as they listened, and swelled into a chorus that went on and on, as though grief would never be assuaged.

* * *

Joseph stood in the noon sun grooming the little donkey, brushing at its coarse white coat with his large hands. The animal was well rested and ready to carry the mother and child when it would be time for the journey. Soon they would be able to leave, perhaps the next day, for the child was almost a week old and Mary's strength had returned. They had gone the day before to pay the tax, Joseph leading the donkey, Mary sitting quite easily on its back, proudly holding her son in her arms on his first trip into the world.

The village was settling back into its usual quiet routine, most of the visitors had departed and the villagers stood in their doorways and gossiped over those who had come and gone. The inn was also quiet except for the caravan of Ahmed the Trader, whose camels still lingered somnolently, waiting for the time when they could resume their passage towards the north. But they had to wait for the recovery of the trader's wife, who still lay ill in the inn. Her child had died before it had seen its first sunrise.

They had passed the tall figure of Ahmed the Trader in his rich robes as they returned through the courtyard. His black eyes, sharp

with the distances of the deserts, had swept over the little family in one all-inclusive glance. They had rested for a brief second on the fair face of Mary's son. His nostrils had flared open as though he were stricken with a sudden pain and then the trader had turned away. Pity had ached in Joseph's heart.

He finished caring for the donkey and led him out behind the stable, where he might crop at the dried grasses, and he began to think himself of some bread and cheese. He smiled at the sight of Mary tending her child. How beautiful, he thought once again, how simple and useful were God's means. He listened as she sang softly, a lullaby he



remembered his own mother singing to him and his brothers and sisters.

He was roused from his reverie by the sound of a step on the path outside and he turned in amazement to meet the proud glance of Ahmed the Trader. His lips parted but he could not think of what he should say. He realized that the jewelled dagger at the trader's waist was reflecting the sun in dazzling colors.

The trader inclined his turbaned head an inch or two and Joseph silently returned the greeting. The dark eyes in the sun-weathered face estimated him from head to foot, "Blessed be God," said the trader.

"Amen," whispered Joseph.

"Greetings to your house," said the trader, he ignored the burned stable.

Joseph again murmured thanks.

"A son has been born?" the measured voice was polite in the ritual.

Joseph wondered in bewilderment where the conventional phrases were leading. It was outside of his experience.

"God gives and God takes away." The words seemed to tear open a wound in the trader's soul and he spoke to Joseph in a manner that set aside all custom and barrier of social degree. "My son was taken from me before the light of heaven had yet shone upon him. My wife grieves and fades on her sick bed and the knowledge hangs heavy upon me that I have no child to comfort me as the years flee onward."

Joseph bowed his head, knowing that no reply was expected.

"I would make your son mine," the trader said suddenly.

Joseph's eyes were wide with consternation. There was a hint of pleading in the trader's voice as he continued, "He will grow to be a prince and my wealth will all be his. Camels and herds and servants and slaves shall live to do his bidding. All the jewels and precious things that are mine shall be his, when I am gathered to my fathers."

Mary had risen from her bed and she stood beside Joseph, small and pale, her blue veil hanging still over her dark robe and the child in her arms. She looked earnestly at the trader's intent face and the corners of her mouth were turned with compassion. Joseph's arm moved quietly until it rested around her waist and he resigned the moment to her.

Ahmed the Trader addressed her, his manner giving her the same respect that he had paid to Joseph. "He will be my pride, the sun of my life, this fair child you have graced with your beauty. You will never know want and the name of Ahmed the Trader shall protect you all your days."

Mary's head moved the fraction of an inch, her eyes were kind, but firm. Her voice was very gentle when she said, "This thing is not to be."

They looked at each other unwaveringly for several seconds. Then the trader again

inclined his head, his face was impassive. "Blessed be this house," he murmured and turned, walking slowly up the path toward the inn.

* * *

Mary was gathering their possessions together, a preliminary to the journey. Her hands caressed the fine white wool that the shepherds had brought and she smiled over the little toys made of finely carved wood and bone that some day her son would play with.

"Everyone has been so kind to us," she said to Joseph who was sitting on a bench holding the sleeping child in his arms. "most of all, the mute woman who cannot speak. But I long for our own roof," she went on, "it will be a joy to lay my son in the cradle you have made him and to see him grow strong and sturdy as he plays in our courtyard." She laughed, "Think Joseph someday he will want to ride on Kiki's back and I will worry lest he falls off."

Joseph smiled, "It will be Kiki's place of worry, I fear. Small boys have at least as much energy as donkeys."

Mary dreamed on, "He will build houses from the blocks that fall from your workbench and his hands will always be filled with splinters."

"Yes," Joseph agreed, "perhaps some day he will help me in the shop." He looked wistfully at Mary, "Do you suppose he might want to be a carpenter?"

"I think he would love to be a carpenter," Mary assured him. She had begun to feel his dependence on her, his need for security and confidence. "What finer thing can a man do than a carpenter, a builder? To watch things grow beneath his hands."

Joseph was grateful, "But, of course, he will be as God wills."

"Yes, as God wills," her blue eyes darkened at some sudden thought, but she did not share it with him. She looked down at the child and gently stroked his cheek with her soft fingers.

Joseph noticed once more the luminous quality of their skin. He tried to imagine the child's face grown to man's size, with

man's features and a great flowing red beard, or obviously her son had inherited Mary's coloring. He could not. It was impossible for him to think beyond these moments and he wanted to store them away in some secret place that they might never be taken from him.

The voice of Mola the Innkeeper sounded in the path and Joseph sighed and handed the child to Mary. He rose to greet their host, but for the second time that day the words would not rise at his bidding.

Over the head of the innkeeper he saw the swaying mountainous forms of three white camels drawn up abreast and about to kneel, that their riders might dismount. It was a sight of great richness, for the camels were decked with embroidered saddle blankets and the robes of the riders were bright with shining silks and gold and jewels.

The expression on the face of the innkeeper was as honestly bewildered as Joseph's. He fluttered one of his fat hands, as if he were trying to make an introduction or proclaim an announcement, but he could not manage.

"The Excellencies . . . to see you," he murmured.

Joseph was suddenly tired, his body lumped on his sturdy bones and he longed to crawl away and lie down in some quiet corner. That which was outside of his custom held an unreality for him and the events of the past week came and went in his mind, like snatches of a fantasy that had been given him in a dream. It was impossible to believe that he stood here and that there stood three lords, almost on the spot where Ahmed the Trader had appeared.

Joseph had never been so close to such

magnificence, which was manifest not only in the clothing, but in the features of his visitors. One was blackbearded, with eyes as keen as an eagle's and as unfathomable. He wore a flowing turban that rippled over his shoulders in the wind of the hillside. One had a brown skin and his wide nose spread on his face and his eyes burned like soft coals beneath his scarlet burnous. The third was as yellow and as fragile as a dried leaf, his face like a lightly carved nut. He wore a strange flat little hat with a curving brim and his hair hung down the back of his blue brocaded robe in a thick black braid. His slanting eyes smouldered with stores of long accumulated wisdom.

Each held in his hand a box of precious workmanship, each looked gravely at Joseph, as though he held the answer to some question.

Finally the first lord spoke, "A prince has been born?" his deep voice rolled smoothly in Joseph's ears.

The second lord said, "It is given to us to pay him honor."

The third lord raised a slender hand on which shone a long golden fingernail. His tones were clear, but thin, as if he spoke from a distance, "We bring him gifts that cry his destiny."

Joseph's head was bowed. He faded slowly from the doorway, a gesture of thanks and welcome stirring him. He realized with overwhelming relief that Mary would know how to cope with the situation and, as the visitors entered the little stable, he leaned back against the wall, meeting the eyes of Mola the Innkeeper, who stood silently beside the camels, a great wonder on his large face.



The Mystery of the Church

BY BISHOP JOHN OF SAN FRANCISCO

Twelfth Contemplation

"Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (*Rev.* 22:14.)

THOU, Sweetest Lord Jesus Christ, art the only Church of Salvation and the two trees of Paradise! As perfect God, Thou art the Tree of life and as perfect Man, Thou art the Tree of knowledge. These two trees made up Thy Cross.

Thou growest, Sweet Tree, in the midst of the earth. "Working salvation in the midst of the earth." (*Ps.* 74:12) Thou givest life to those who feed on Thee.

Thou art the food of those who hunger for righteousness, and the knowledge of good and evil for all who have lost their way in the paradise of Thy will. . . . Thou art the Tree of the blessed knowledge of good and of perfect vision of evil; of the wise distinction between good and evil; of the separation of good from evil; of choosing good and turning away from evil. Thou art the Tree of liberation from evil and steadfastness in good.

Thou art the New Adam. . . . Thy Church is the New Eve "the mother of all living," "the bone of Thy bones and the flesh of Thy flesh."

Life in Thy Church is the New Paradise.

Thou hast given man the voice of blissful and awful immortality—conscience; and in it hast given him Thyself.

Thou, O Truth, art heard in the conscience of thieves and Samaritans, pagans and Christians! Thou—the Church in heaven, on earth and in the under-world—speakest in the hearts of all who are coming to Thee, stumbling as they go, of all who strive for Thee and who reject Thy love, of all who behold Thy world through grace and of all who shut out that vision. Thou lovest all, callest to all—and crucifiest all, so as to teach them Thy love the better.

Thou speakest to each one with his own voice. . . . Thou singest to some, whisperest to others. . . . Perhaps a man will respond. Perhaps he will come to Thee?

With "the Greeks" Thou art "a Greek."

Thy word is near to every heart, but it is bitter for the sinful will. Oh, that we, Thy servitors, could speak with Thy words alone.

The redemption wrought by Thee is unfathomable. The forgiveness granted by Thee is limitless. Marvellous is the mystery of Thy Cross! "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price" (*Isaiah* 55:1).

The thief said only one word to the Church "Remember me." . . . And Thou didst remember him! Thou who changed the water of hopeless human suffering into the wine of penitent sorrow, hast changed that wine into the Blood of Thy eternal life. . . . And Thou makest the cross of which I am nailed as a thief into Thy own cross. . . . Thou makest "the natural" full of grace, and transmutest human Church into Thy Church.

And we too are crucified on that Cross of the Sword which Thou hast brought to earth, instead of a false peace with sinners.

Thou callest us in the radiance of the heavens and the earth. Thou speakest in the storm and the tempest and appearest in human life, in all its joyful and painful happenings. Thou art in the still small voice of man's heart and revealest Thyself in its weakness. Thou givest life and wisdom to the world through every breath and creature.

In all Thou sowest Truth accessible to each, but joyful for the faithful only.

Thou condemnest no one and nothing, except man's obstinate evil will. "Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more" (*Isaiah* 1:5). The fragrance of Thy Church is in the beauty of the heavens and the earth, and even before Thy Will.

is preached, Thou hadst scattered it among the stars and lilies.

Through man all creatures ascend to Thee, since man who abides in Thy love is the part of creation. Through man who is the universe is called to eternal life, and the abundance of merciful love and service.

Through man faithful to Thee, Thou becomest in Thy mysteries, and wilt soon become manifestly, the Way and the Truth for all creation. . . . This cannot be conceived or imagined. But it has been proclaimed. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him" (1 Cor. 2:9).

Everything is weeping, thirsting and fainting in the expectation of the coming of Thy Kingdom which "hath drawn nigh." . . . This is why the life of the faithful is never content with its own righteousness; it is love which ever strives for perfection.

Creator of those who love and who do not love Thee, Thou callest all to salvation. Come unto me all that labour"—in their love—and "are heavy laden"—with their lack of love!

And the unloving shall love. . . . The loving love all the more faithfully.

Thou callest all who walk beside Thee and do not wander on distant paths. . . . And Thy servants, Thy sons, "go out into highways." (St. Matt. 22:10) Thou gatherest together those who answer Thy call, "as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings." (St. Luke 13:34)

Created under the cover of Thy heaven, men are already "in Thy courts," on Thy far and distant paths.

O Church, mercy and love! Righteous is Thy Judgment and infinite is Thy goodness to the sons of men in their weakness and faulty. Thou art the mother of all. Not all are Thy sons, but Thou art the mother of all. Reveal Thyself to those who know Thee not, bind up the wounds of the sinful world's children wounded by thieves. Send Thy missionaries, and command Thy priests not to pass by those lying in the road.

Let not Thine elect who have answered Thy call despise them who have not, nor

those who have entered Thy house despise them who have remained outside.

For in raising the dead by the power of Him Who raised life, Thou shalt make many of the last be partakers of the supper of first love. (Rev. 2:4) And to many who "have been faithful in a very little" Thou shalt give authority over great things.

I have come to the end of my hymn to the Church. . . . Thou seest, Lord, my imperfect striving to make manifest Thy perfection.

I merely stand at the threshold of the shining Church and hold out my hand like a beggar: Lord, give me knowledge of Thy Church!

Only beyond that threshold does the perfect ascent to perfection take place, and man rises not from imperfection to perfection and from weakness to strength, but from the perfect to the more perfect, "from strength to strength" (Ps. 84).

This is how it shall be with regenerated creature.

And even now—not I, but Thy faithful rise not only from weakness to strength, from ungodliness to grace, but "from strength to strength," "from glory to glory." (2 Cor. 3:17), and are given "grace for grace" according to the Gospel read on the holy night of Easter.

[The conclusion of this series]



Overcome the World

BY FREDERICK S. WANDALL

THERE are many similarities between the politico-social climate of our day and the time our Lord was on earth. Then, as now, a despotic state was in power, loss of true religion coupled with religious formalism and moral laxness created a vacuum for secular pursuits and pseudo-religious creeds; strife, anxiety and fear were prevalent in lands Rome conquered, and these conditions exist today on a wider scale. I think our Lord cured as many neurotics as he did the physically ill. Not to belabor the point, it should be evident that whatever Christ taught should be applicable to the twentieth century, probably more so because the need is greater. His truths are eternal and universal. Unfortunately, Americans are prone to take His Words of Life too lightly; we are complacent about Christianity. This undermines the zeal necessary to forward God's work and it mocks the martyrs who are suffering under Communist purges. Even in the United States we are not free from attack: bigotry, indifference, atheism—the age-old enemies of the Faith—are still with us. It is with such burdens that a Christian must struggle on, endeavoring to follow Him who is the Master, the Good Shepherd who will not lead us astray. His voice echoes down the centuries: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." Persecuted, worried and confused, the disciples believed and found reassurance: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will refresh you." We too are bidden to come, for He is "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever." One of His last remarks before Gethsemane has singular significance: *"These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."* (St. John, 16:33) The first sentence is Jesus' summation of what He has tried to do for humanity and how our relationship to Him and His teachings will change our lives. Then He tells us of the sacrifices and diffi-

culties that will accrue from our new status in the world; the responsibilities we accept as Christians form a covenant with God that entails devotion to the Faith. Finally we learn that the world—this means both gross and subtle enticements that lure us away from God, and all other interests that prevent us from fulfilling our role as Christ's servants—is not so terribly important after all; the really vital thing is God's Love and His Will. Adoration and obedience are supreme aspects of human nature; God created us for this purpose. The scope of such an expectation is immense and almost terrifying; it requires every ounce of energy we can muster. But it is not impossible, for Christ's victory over the world is ours if we are spiritually receptive. It is Christ, God and the Holy Spirit that provides the ultimate power to carry on a Christian way of life in the world that is unfriendly but not alien to the Gospel of love and peace.

To appreciate the great significance of overcoming the world we must ask what the nature of the world is in which the Christian dwells and what it is he should overcome (conquer). For him the world is temporal and home; our Lord has promised "heavenly mansions" in the next life. But this terrestrial ball is no comfortable waiting room. The metaphysical nature of the world is a complex mixture of good and evil with the latter more often in evidence. Wickedness has a sensational quality to it, a madness that entraps individuals and mobs and nations, making them irrational in mind, destructive in body, sinful in soul. A sick, ridden world is the result of men turning from the goodness and moral law of God. "And this is the judgment, that men loved darkness more than the light." The true purpose of life is to love God and our fellow men; failure to do so is the source of all sin. Evil does not come by itself; it is a parasite, growth on the good we fail to do. Hence sins are not something we create, but rather things which grow in the absence of religious faith, like weeds in a garden un-



tended. At the same time we are at fault. That is man's predicament. The animal, vegetable, and mineral categories of life are not troubled by sin. Mankind is called to a higher station and the insight he has been given of the order and quality of the universe is at once his glory and his pain. To show us what He expects of us God Himself was manifest in the "fullness of time" and made possible our salvation. That God desires our deliverance from the burden of sin and has shown us the way comprises the true dignity of man.

Since the Renaissance, men have preferred to ignore this priceless revelation of redemption. The mental and physical abilities of human nature are exploited at the expense of the spiritual potentialities. The foolish bequest of the Renaissance humanists is the proud assertion that man can save himself and can ignore and deny the Creator and Sustainer of heaven and earth. Despite the Reformation, Western Christendom continued to make increased compro-

mises and concessions to pagan values. Contemporary civilization has now become so enraptured with its secularism that it has almost lost sight of ideals and the pervading Reality of God. Rampant individualism replaces the proven wisdom of Scripture and the authority of the Church in the moral standards of society. "Anything goes," describes the relativism in our unhappy, chaotic world. Men forget Christ's injunction, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and these things [the fundamental necessities] shall be added unto you." Materialism, greed, hate and blasphemy corrupt men's hearts and prevent them from finding their way to God. But the Christian cultivates love in his heart toward God and men that he may overcome corrupting influences. The Christian is a pilgrim on a heavenly journey from the City of Destruction to the City of God. The pleasures that secularists pursue are not for him, because he seeks only to do the Will of God. He realizes that "The

world is too much with us, late and soon. Getting and spending we lay waste our powers;" and he will not exchange his soul for a mess of pottage. "What profiteth a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul?" With this in his heart he instinctively turns to our Lord who is "the way, the truth and the life."

But are we not inextricably bound to the world? The skeptic thinks it absurd to consider any avenue of escape short of schizophrenia. The secret is in man's being more than flesh and blood—he has body, mind and soul; he lives on three planes: physical, rational and spiritual. The last area is the means for rising above earthly limitations, but it requires our greatest effort. To live the life of the spirit demands that we accept without hesitation the guidance of our Lord and it also involves a sense of the mystery of God. In essence all Christians are mystics; communion with God by prayer and

two questions both religious and secular people ask: (1) Can we separate ourselves from the world? (2) Should we do so? The reply for the Christian is the same for both. Yes, partly we can and in part we should. There is a paradox at the heart of each problem. (1) As physical creatures we are solidly grounded in the matrix of the world dependent on others for good, comfort and health. In search for these we are constantly dealing with people; our efforts to gain a livelihood are largely external activities. At the same time we have the inner realm of the spirit to which we can retreat for private inspection and meditation. Perhaps this may seem too introspective for some, born as we are to a pragmatic culture. But unless we learn to draw on the inner resources of the Holy Spirit we are apt to be one-sided and incomplete so far as our religious life is concerned. (2) To turn the receptiveness of our souls and consciences to God is not escaping from reality but the partaking of a greater Reality. The invisible world of God's Presence is in fact the highest aspect of life we can possibly know. The awful, crucial issue that hits us squarely is the fact that if we do not separate ourselves from the world, we shall by default separate ourselves from God. And yet the paradox which we dare not overlook is the necessity for "going into the world and preaching the gospel," that is, being an active *witness* for our Lord. By example we prove our belief in Christ and God. For God meant the world should be saved, that men and women everywhere should know of His love and find joy, peace and brotherhood. The phrase "God so loved the world" warns us not to despise the way of men and nations, however blind and callous they may be to God. Our function is to help them into the "paths of righteousness." The environment in which the law of Christ is put in operation is not pleasant; sin never is. But we need not succumb to it. We must be on our guard day and night against the wiles of the Devil. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. For any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the



SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST
By Fouquet

sacrament is explainable in no other way. Thus we have answered to some extent the

...ther, but is of the world. And the world
...sseth away, and the lust thereof; but he
...at doeth the will of God abideth for ever."
...John 2:15-17)

Under increasing tensions and confusions
the worldly person tends to become frus-
trated, insecure and uncreative; his despair
and apathy wastes the talents God gave him,
and causes him to lose his direction and per-
spective. When we have faith in God, how-
ever much of this spiritual disease is cured! Our
visions are lightened. We see events and pos-
sessions in their proper proportion and value.
We no longer rationalize sin but bend every
effort to root it out. By so doing we are
overcoming the world and coming close
to God. Christians, willing to devote them-
selves to the work of the Church and make
sacrifices of time, money and self, can pro-
vide the vision and strength to restore
abused lives to their rightful relationship
with God. The weak Christian will quit
and the impatient will turn to other fields of
endeavor which promise quick success. Pa-
tience, sincere interest in all sorts and con-
ditions of men and a steadfast heart are
the surest defenses against failure. Christ
knew exactly what it meant to be despised
and rejected of men. "He was in the world,
and the world was made by Him and the
world knew Him not." This fact should
prepare us for a world that is frequently
fickle, dangerous and unreliable in its
judgments. We must learn to depend on
God, not the world. "Flesh does fail us, but
the Spirit never. Hopes pinned on humankind
alone often disappoint us, but never faith in
God as Jesus revealed Him." (*Forward-
Day-by-day*) Our Lord made certain that
His disciples were ready. "These things
I command you, that ye love one another.
If the world hates you, you know that it
hated me before it hated you. If ye were
of the world, the world would love his own:
but because ye are not of the world, but I
have chosen you out of the world, there-
fore the world hateth you." (St. John
15:17ff)

It is evident that Christians are respon-
sible to the obligations of the temporal and
the heavenly realms, but only a partial loy-
alty does God expect to the first whereas



SAINT BARBARA
By Francia

(Courtesy of Mrs. L. M. Williams and of the Metropolitan
Museum of Art)

a complete one is expected to the Heavenly
Throne. "My Kingdom is not of this world"
said the Eternal King to Pilate. Recall
also that He said "The Kingdom of Heaven
is within you," i.e., within one's soul even
here on earth; therefore we must protect
it from sin. That is why we renounced "the
world, the flesh and the devil" in our bap-
tism to become "the children of God and
the inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven."
As Christians our duty is to bring others
into the awareness of this Grace, hence the
strong appeal for evangelism that the
Church makes today. As instruments of
God's Holy Spirit we are brought into
communion with past saints and mission-
aries. It is quite a special privilege if we
but realize it. Writes St. John in his First
Epistle, "Behold, what manner of love the Fa-
ther hath bestowed upon us, that we should be
called the children of God: therefore the
world knoweth us not, because it knew Him
not." The command to overcome the world
is implicit in both Jesus' life and teachings.
He advised us not to become entangled in

the world's snare, for it is the place of darkness. But retreat is not the solution. To be loyal to both Heaven and Earth our Lord ordered us to love one another and bring light into the darkness. "Unto whom much is given much is required." Let us take upon ourselves the role of a crusader. Our task has a godly admonition behind it and a spiritual purpose before it: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Besides developing as perfect an inner nature as possible we must include the broader aspects of attracting others to Christ. In our lives we must reflect the spirit of God which dwells within; otherwise we are merely latent (or maybe lazy) witnesses of Christ. St. Theresa put it bluntly when she wrote, "Christ has no hands but our hands, no feet but our feet."

Some skeptics and humanists contend that this is the only world human beings can expect to know. In the light of Christ's resurrection (a momentous event in history which is often denied by "naturalists") "this world or none" idea is naive and false. The Church teaches that the world is limited by its physical properties; at best life is transitory. The worldliness all about us holds no promise of salvation for the soul. That is why we must overcome it. It inhibits man from the rich life which we attain in the worship of God on earth and more fully in the Presence of the Almighty and Eternal Lord after death. When Jesus was taken by the Devil into a high mountain and was shown "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them," He was not tempted to forsake God because the pomp and power of men soon passes into dust and ashes. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth . . . but . . . in heaven: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Man is a crepuscular animal whose acceptableness to God and the final attainment of Heaven depends on his actions and state of grace on earth. It is of the utmost importance, then, that even though we have to work *in* the world we do not become identified with its evil. "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" is our watchword. The world in all its vain-glorious manifestations represents the at-

tempt of temporal power to achieve dominion over the spiritual realm. By the very nature of his moral capabilities man can rise above this evil side of life. He alone of all living creatures can become a temple of the Holy Spirit. He has to be an example of the highest ethical principles and the greatest of all is love, spontaneous, sacrificing, overflowing; such love cannot be mapped out or categorized. In addition he must be consecrated in the service and worship of God. The Christian may feel many sorrows, rebukes, and tests of body and soul, but his comfort is secure. Who else but our Lord could say "be of good cheer" and make us believe it? We are assured of the victory of the world by Jesus' resurrection and ascension. And we are to rise with Him in spirit now, for it is not we who live, St. Paul has told us, but Christ who lives in us that makes the conquest of evil possible. Here is the supreme reality of life: God does exist and His goodness never fails. It is such a reality that all men are compelled to recognize in this life or the next. The choice is ours—shall it be God or Mammon? We cannot serve both.

There are two places where sin can exist: one within (which St. Paul describes as the warfare between the flesh and the spirit) and the other without (which is the world). God intends that goodness should exist in both places, but He has allowed man free will to reach it by his own ways. Man is right in the middle between the Love of God and the Lust of the World, and the struggle goes on—which shall possess his soul? The triumph over the world lies with Christians who "worship the Father in Spirit and in truth." To the extent to which we overcome our own sins and direct others to do the same to that degree is the world and moral evil conquered. It can be done by a creative effort of the will, through prayer, worship, and deeds of love. In prayer we are given strength from on high to conquer self and find courage to oppose evil. We spoke of evil as parasitic. In order to combat it the positive virtues must be utilized; passive acceptance of God's benefits is a sin of omission. Cancel out the negative quality of evil by the character of your life; make every word, deed and thought God-centered and it will

near the wholesome mark of deep love and untainted goodness. The well-spring of our power is found in our Lord: "For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world, even our faith. And who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" The spiritual direction of the Living Christ is the way to salvation for each person and the whole world. By means of God's Grace we are saved from sin if only we would become new creatures, recreated by the Holy Spirit. The transformation of self into the image of God seems like an extravagant, impossible demand. But God is not unreasonable. All He asks is our complete trust and willing-

ness. To give oneself for something perfect beyond the self—losing one's life to find it—is a spiritual principle that the world cannot duplicate, for salvation is not given by this world. In faithful allegiance to God we shall be assured of "that peace which the world cannot give," for the peace mankind seeks is available only from God.

"O God, the protector of all that trust in Thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy; Increase and multiply upon us thy mercy, that, thou being our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal that we finally lose not the things eternal. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord."



MADONNA AND CHILD

By Girolamo del Pacchia

(Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.)

[Kress Collection]

Forgiveness

A Twelfth Lesson for Children

Property needed: A purple stole, a dictionary containing "remit" and "retain."

Opening prayers: Our Father, Adoration, Invitation, Contrition.

Memory work: How does God make our souls strong? What are the two Great Sacraments? What are the five lesser sacraments? When does our Lord's life come into us? Are all baptized people good? After Baptism what do we need? In Holy Communion what does our Lord give us? Before we receive Holy Communion what must we do? In the Communion Service (Eucharist, Mass) what do we offer to the Father?

"Game:" When are we closest to Jesus? Whom does He invite to Holy Communion—the good or the bad? Why have the Service early in the morning? Why kneel to a piece of bread? Would it be *like* God to make Himself so small? Which is it *more* like—the first Christmas or the first Easter? What would happen to Jesus if He came and nobody believed He was there? If people who hated each other received Holy Communion? How much are we *allowed* to eat before Communion? How many drinks of water? Which service does most for God? What is the *big* difference between Holy Communion and Morning Prayer? When would I most want to receive Holy Communion?

Before going on to the new lesson, it is important to review the main points of Lesson Five: that sin is against *God*, that God will forgive *any* sin for which we are really sorry, that we must be sorry out of love for *Him*. Make *sure* these points are fresh and clear to the children, for otherwise the lesson on forgiveness will have little meaning.

New lesson: When we are truly sorry and ask God to forgive us, how does He *answer* us? If you apologized to anybody else, and he wouldn't answer, what would you think? Would God treat us like that? But *how* will He answer? How can we know for sure that we are forgiven?

If the reply is that we "feel better," ask

what other things give us a pleasant feeling, and what other things make us feel bad. Then ask if good people can feel bad, and if bad people can feel good. Finally, ask if we can really tell much by the way we feel—if we feel nice can we be *sure* we are forgiven?

If one of your friends had quarreled with you, and he came to say he was sorry, and you wanted to make it up, how would you let him know that? Tell it to him, of course. Or if you had just had your tonsils out and couldn't talk, what else could you do? That is, you could answer him either by a *word* or by a *sign*. God uses those same two ways. Who can think of a sign God uses to show that we are clean from sin, that all our sins are washed away? (If necessary, have them look in the Nicene Creed, p. 71, for "remissions of sins.") Who can think of *two* reasons why God does it with *water*? (symbolism of cleansing, outward proof that it is real.) Then let us say, *God forgives us first by Baptism*. How does God forgive us first?

Once baptized, are we good the rest of our lives? Well, then, if we sin *after* Baptism and are sorry, how will God answer us *then*?

Suppose there were a great crowd of people here, and Jesus was very busy teaching and healing sick people, and you saw Him beckon for you to come to Him, what would you do? Suppose, when you got there, Jesus said, "Will you take a message for me (be my messenger)?" You would? Well, suppose Jesus said, "You see that man there under the tree, who looks so sad? Go and say to him, 'Jesus says your sins are all forgiven.'" Could Jesus ask you to say that? He wanted to? Would you do it? How do you think the man under the tree would feel? If he started to shake your hand and thank you, what would you say to him?

Suppose now that Jesus sends you to another man, but this time He does it differently: He says, "Go and talk to that other man, and *find* out if he is sorry for his sins and if he is, then tell him I have forgiven

him." Could Jesus trust you that way if He wanted to? And if the man *was* sorry, and you gave him Jesus' message, and he started to thank you. . . . ?

All this is "suppose." But *did* Jesus ever send messengers to tell people their sins were forgiven? Will all look now at the gospel on p. 171? It begins "the same day." How could we find out what day this is? Who will look in the Bible for us? Why were the disciples afraid of the Jews? How did Jesus come in? (If they miss this, have them look at v. 26.) Why did He show them his hands and his side? "Peace be unto you" was the regular greeting among Jewish people of those days. What did Jesus say next? How would you say it in the language we talk today? ("Just as my Father sent *me* as His messenger, so now. . . .") Why do you think He blew His breath on them? (As an outward sign that He was giving them. . . . ?) What does it mean to "remit" somebody's sins? (dictionary if needed) If "remit" means "forgive," what do you suppose "retain" means (dictionary) Well then, what does Jesus mean by "whose soever sins . . . retained?" How would we say that today? ("Whoever's sins you forgive . . . " or perhaps "If you forgive anybody's sins. . . .")

How many of our Lord's twelve disciples were present (John 20.24, Matthew 27.3-5)? When those first disciples grew old and died, who took their places? Does our Lord still use men as messengers to tell people their sins are forgiven? Look on p. 546: The name of the service? What does the bishop do? What does he say? When he says, "Receive . . ." and "Whose sins . . ." whose words is he using? Whose messenger is the man now? What do we call a man who is Jesus' messenger to forgive people's sins? This (purple stole) is his messenger's badge. Does he wear it all the time or . . . when? When he delivers his message he says, "I absolve thee from all thy sins" (that is, "I set you free" from them). So the message is called "Absolution" (blackboard) and our second answer is, *After Baptism God forgives us by Absolution.* After Baptism how does God forgive

us? How does God forgive us *first*? After Baptism how does God forgive us?

Did Jesus say to "remit" *everybody's* sins, or to remit some and "retain" some? Why, do you suppose? Because there are people whom He doesn't love, or because . . . ? (If somebody had done wrong to you and *wasn't* sorry, could you make up with him?) Well then, which people are to have their sins "remitted," and which are to have them "retained?" But how are the people to know which people are really sorry? They may say that they are, but do they always mean it? Can he see inside their heads? How *can* he tell?

He has a test: he says to each one, "Do you think you could tell me what you have done?" Would the person *have* to tell him? Could he, if he wanted to? If he is willing to tell, is that a pretty good test?

If you were the priest, and somebody came to you like that, and some of the things he had done were hard to tell, but he was brave and told them all right straight, how do you think you would feel toward him? How do you think our Lord would feel? What would our Lord want you to say (see end of sec-



ond point above)? How do you think the person will feel when you have said it? Whom should he thank? So our third answer is: *"Absolution is God's pardon spoken by a priest.* What is Absolution? How does God forgive us first? After Baptism how does God forgive us? What is Absolution?

If you were a priest and people had confessed things to you, what do you think our Lord would want you to do afterwards with your mouth? That is so important that we say the priest's lips are "sealed." What do you suppose that means? (That he can NEVER tell anything he heard in a confession—N.E.V.E.R.—no, not even if he is a witness in court—because Whose secret is it really?) And if *you* should accidentally hear what somebody confessed to a priest, what about *your* lips?

If we want God to forgive us, the first thing to do is to find out what sins we have done. They are easy to forget. Here is a prayer to help you remember them: *O God, show me my sins; O God, make me sorry for my sins; O God, set me free from my sins.* After you have said that, be quiet and really try to remember, so that you can be forgiven and be happy.

ARNOLD KRONE, Priest

Early in the morning of Election Day we received a cable from Bolahun announcing the sudden death of Father Arnold Krone. This came as a great shock to us all, for he seemed always in the best of health.

For many years before his ordination by Bishop Rowe, Father Krone was in Church work in Alaska. More recently he spent many months helping in and about our monastery, Mount Calvary, in Santa Barbara, California. Last year, at his own request, he was transferred to our mission in Liberia. Before he sailed he was admitted as a Priest Companion of our Order, a privilege for which he had been aspiring for years. He was 49 years of age.

Always cheerful, always willing, always helpful, his going leaves a big gap in the mission ranks in Bolahun. May God grant him rest and eternal joy.

Closing prayers: the prayer just learned a pause for thought, then the Prayer of Contrition.

Homework is to fill the blanks in the following:

SIN means disobeying..... It is a sin to.....what God told us not to do, or to.....what He told us not to say or.....to do what He told us we must. It is a sin even to.....what He told us not to think if we do it on purpose: that is, if we.....a bad thought in our mind AFTER we see that it is bad.

No matter how.....our sins are God still.....us and....., to forgive us. We should ask God to.....us what sins we have done and make us.....for them the right way. If we are sorry just for our.....sake, because our sins have hurt....., that is not enough. We should be sorry for.....sake, because our sins were against.....And we should.....God exactly what sins we did and.....Him to forgive us. If we want to we.....tell our sins to some other person whom we trust. Only.....ourselves can MAKE us do this. But if we do it we shall feel.....we keep our sins locked up inside us they make us.....The way to get them off our minds and be happy again is.....them. If we confess them to a priest, he can give us....., that is God's.....spoken right to us.

On Easter Day Jesus said to His first priests (St. John chap 20 v 23: "Whoever sins.....

How would you say that in your own words.....

Of course it is.....who forgives us the priest is only His.....We should be sorry by.....our sins and by promising to say the.....gives us. His lips are ".....:" can.....tell our sins to anyone else even in.....So we need not be afraid to confess.....our sins that.....can remember. If we do this.....can be.....that God has forgiven them all.



VIRGIN CROWNED WITH SAINT KATHARINE AND SAINT BARBARA
By Lucas Cranach

Letter to the Lapsed

BY ALFRED T. B. HAINES

MY Dear Friend:

I am writing to invite you to come home. It has been a long time since we saw you, and we miss you! I suspect that occasionally you too, long for the old home, for I have known so many who were never really happy when they were away. Some of them returned of their own volition, but most were rather diffident about making the first approach, so I am sending you this very special and personal invitation.

I am not quite clear about the real reason for your going. Maybe it began as a sort of gradual drift—just a little carelessness about home obligations and duties, or perhaps you were curious and wanted to see for yourself how those “others” lived on the outside. Afterwards you were timid about returning, and not sure what kind of reception you would get . . . was that it?

Or did you just follow the crowd? There were those bright young people with whom you danced and played and went to school, and that particular pal whose ruthless ambition you admired. There was a sort of subtle scorn among your social set for the restraining influences of the old home, and you found it hard to resist these influences, was that it?

Later, I know, you became absorbed in your career. Nothing else mattered—for a time! But there were moments, difficult moments when you wished you could benefit by the advice of your older brothers and sisters: empty moments which could not be filled by your business associates: moments of nostalgic memories that you could not banish! How do I know? Well, you see I have been through it all, before!

It was about this time, wasn't it, that you met up with the group who said that there were some nice things about the old home (which you appreciated) but that there was too much discipline, and too much attention given to things that did not really matter. They also said that the good

things were mixed up with a lot of ideas which were positively wrong to-day, though no one had questioned them for generations! They told you that so long as you were sincere, and tried to do the right thing, nothing else mattered. Once in a while they held meetings at which these sentiments were expressed, but you found these rather tame and cold, and after the novelty of them wore off, the hunger in your heart remained.

The inevitable reaction was climaxed by your rather sudden marriage, wasn't it? To please your beloved, you cut loose from all the old ties. You were introduced to a new family where you tried very hard to feel “at home!” There was a certain glamour about it at first, but their ways were strange and foreign to one of your background. Even their worship was conducted in a language that you did not understand, and before long you began to wish that you had not thrown away your birthright, though you told yourself it was too late to go back, and in your loneliness you wondered about the future! You see, “blood is thicker than water” and you do have blood ties with the old home. I can remember holding you in my arms and baptizing you in the little church that has never forgotten you. How still you were, as I signed you with the sign of the cross and incorporated you into Christ's Holy Catholic Church, thereby making you a sharer in the benefits procured for us by His Precious Blood!

I shall never forget how radiant you were when I presented you to the bishop for Confirmation, nor how serious you were as you answered his questions, before receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit at his hands, and assuming all the obligations of a Christian. Do you recall that day, and your undertaking “to follow Christ, to worship *every Sunday* in His Church, and to work and give and pray for the spread of His Kingdom?” I am not saying these things to upbraid you, but simply to remind you that you are still

child of Holy Church, still wanted, and still loved!

Do you recall your first Holy Communion? It was a bright sunshiny morning, and inside the Church the gleaming altar was bright with fragrant flowers and softly glowing candles. What a solemn stillness there was at the consecration as the priest in his snow-white vestments knelt to adore His Lord—and yours! You told me that when you received Holy Communion something happened to you, something indefinable, too deep for words. You were lifted, for awhile, out of this mundane world, and became conscious of a spiritual joy and power that you had never experienced before. At this and subsequent communions was a magnificent and rewarding Reality that really thrilled you. I am sure you missed all this when you left us, and although the memory of it became less vivid as time went on, you could never banish it from your mind.

Even after your marriage, you could not forget your Mother Church entirely, could you? Since then, of course, you have discovered that the same old human imperfections are everywhere, and are more absent from your new associates than your old ones. You have found that actually, your adopted home cannot offer you any deeper satisfactions or more valid realities than the home of your childhood. No doubt you have, when shopping, come across stores that advertise “exclusive” items, only to find the articles in other shops at less cost, and you may have reflected that complete regimentation of thought and action, together with the use of a foreign tongue is too high a price to pay for that which your Mother Church offers without arbitrary demands or exclusive claims. Knowledge and experience have combined to show you that the Episcopal Church provides all that is common to the rest of the Holy Catholic Church with equal certainty and security.

I gather from mutual friends that you are very unhappy as things are. Your children, I know, are attending the public high school, but none of the members of your family now attend any church. Why don't you come

back home? I can assure you of a very warm welcome. There is nothing to be afraid or ashamed of, in taking this step. You did not really have to leave your church home to experience life or to be happy, though you may once have thought so. At any rate, you know better now, and you can still retrieve your Baptismal allegiance and keep your Confirmation vows. You really need your Mother Church at this juncture, and I know you will never be completely happy apart from her. Between ourselves, she needs you too, for she has a terrific job to do in this distraught world, and it calls for the active support of all her members.

As for your marriage partner—well, the Episcopal Church has proved a real haven for thousands who needed the fullness of the Faith with all its help and certainty, yet could not endure undue regimentation or the addition of doctrines peculiar to only one segment of Christendom. The more I think about it, the more I am convinced that you and your entire family would find a happy solution to all your problems in the Anglican Communion, of which our Episcopal Church is a part.

Think it over won't you, and let me arrange your reception. You will be warmly welcomed so do not hesitate any longer. I am looking forward to hearing from you very shortly, and meanwhile may Our Lord grant you vision, courage, and guidance, and may His richest blessings rest upon you and yours!

Affectionately your faithful friend,

SACERDOS.



Five Minute Sermon

BY JULIEN GUNN, O.H.C.

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. . . ." (Hebrews 1:1.)

THE message of a great difference is declared by this passage from Hebrews which is appointed as the Epistle for one of the Christmas Day celebrations. It is a difference between the past and the present. It is one thing to note evolution and change as a work of time's passage, but it is a radical difference that is here declared. Hitherto God has spoken to His chosen people indirectly, previously they have enjoyed only an imperfect manifestation of His Person; now we have known the intimacy of His Presence, the direct contact with One who is the "express image of His Person." Let us ponder this in trembling reverence.

The Incarnation is the supreme fact of history, the dividing line between the old and the new. God clothed in human flesh is indeed a staggering fact and a wonderful proclamation to sinful man that he matters in the sight of the Almighty, the Creator of all things. Greek gods took human shapes in order to seduce or kill; God becomes man that He might save. It is salvation which begins now, is made available in the present, and not the vague possibility put off to an indefinite and remote future.

The great difficulty of the Incarnation is its very simplicity; just that: God takes on Himself human nature in all its limitations (with the exception of sin.) This simple act of love on the part of God is for our redemption, our reconciliation to the Father.

Jesus Christ comes in order that He may redeem human flesh through the flesh which He had created. God could have done this work of redemption in many different ways, but of course those possibilities are known only to Him, and may be assumed by inferences on our part. He might simply have

done the work from the outside, by setting the human situation right by divine fiat. But speculations come to nought at the foot of the manger when we come face to face with the supreme fact of divine Love identifying Himself with creation, in order that through creature He might redeem creation.

Whatever God wills is the highest expression of His love, and for that reason we know that the Incarnation is the most fitting way for God to redeem us. Love always chooses the best instead of the good. Strength through weakness, power through meekness, joy through suffering, these are the ways of divine action, once God has identified Himself with us.

But our joy and confidence does not stop with the contemplation of the divine condescension; the Incarnation does not limit redemption to the future when the body shall be put off and when creation is to be denied. No, redemption becomes an operating force now, for through our human nature God the Word speaks to us in the present. Human nature *is* redeemed. We have but to realize what is at work now. Though human flesh in itself is weak, now through God it is made strong; our boast is in the Lord. That redeemed human nature is our nature made perfect in union with the divine nature which alone recreates that which had been defiled and deprived of its true destiny.

Life has been given us at the manger and our baptism is the new birth into that new state of being; life in Christ. There has been a radical change in us which must be recognized not as a mere subjective relationship but the grafting of a weak stock into a vigorous tree.

Contemplate the Babe in the manger with the knowledge that here is our new life before us. We can never be the same when we are convinced that God has been loving and that we have only to trust that love implicitly and not fear. Leave the simple offering of ourselves at the manger.



VIRGIN AND CHILD
By Murillo

And where is the manger now? The Christmas altar is the manger; the church is the stable in Bethlehem. Our offering is signified by the bread and wine which are presented on our behalf by the priest to be charged with the life-giving power of the

Presence of Jesus Christ. At communion that gift of ourselves comes back to us as our responsibility charged with the restored humanity of our present Lord. We offer and He receives; He offers and we receive.

The Order of St. Helena

AT the Mother House the month of Angels was observed with unusual drama and fervor and with special demands upon our Holy Guardian Angels, leaving us a little breathless but very thankful indeed. Their feast day, October 2, immediately precedes our dedication day, October 3, which we had been planning for weeks to celebrate with a High Mass and guests to breakfast. Preparation was so well under way with the chapel decorated with chrysanthemums and branches of dogwood, and cakes baking in the kitchen, that Sister Josephine, Sister Katharine and Sister Mary Joseph drove into New York, planning to be back before Vespers. The afternoon passed briskly and happily, bringing the Father Superior in time for tea, and we hardly noticed it had grown cloudy. During the evening meditation a terrific storm burst. The meditations of many of us were interspersed with intercessions for the sisters who were still out. Just before Vespers a call came saying "there had been a slight accident." The sisters were in the hospital in New Brunswick where one of them would have to spend the night. Arrangements had to be made. Father McCoy went to New Brunswick and brought Sister Josephine back. It was late when we went to bed and what with giving thanks to God and the Holy Angels for so little injury to the sisters and with thoughts of the day ahead, few of us slept very soundly that night.

The dedication festival on October 3 went on as planned. We sang the Pontifical High

Mass in the presence of the Bishop of New Jersey and, for us, a big congregation with the Superior as Celebrant. It was a beautiful service. After the storm, it suddenly turned cold and our breakfast, which we had arranged to have out-of-doors, had to be served inside. We hardly saw how it could be managed, but it was and everyone seemed to enjoy it. In the midst of it, with no warning at all, an ambulance arrived with Sister Katharine. It was most embarrassing for her to be carried on a stretcher through the crowd in the reception room. She was taken upstairs and turned over to an aspirant who is also a nurse, and the party went on.

The Holy Cross novices seemed to have a good time, too. They brought us the gas broiler Father Kroll had promised us and put it up on the back porch.

The first week in October Father Gunder gave us an instruction on the Religious Life. Primarily it was intended for the Novitiate but we all heard it and all are looking forward to his class this winter.

The week of October 20 Sister Josephine attended a meeting on religious education at the College of Preachers in Washington.

On November 15 we had the clothing of a novice.

Sister Jeannette is studying for five days a week at the New Jersey College for Women.

We hope our friends will join us in thanking God for preservation in what might have been a serious accident, and for the continued growth of our Order.

* * *

For the Sisters of St. Helena in Versailles the autumn has flown. In the convent the quiet routine of the Trinity season came abruptly to an end with the beginning of the School, this year even earlier than usual. The faculty, with a large number of new members, assembled three days before school opened for a conference. The philosophy of Christian education was discussed by the Headmistress with particular emphasis





BISHOP YASHIRO AT MARGARET HALL

the history and objective of the school. The conference was followed by discussions concerning each department and its relation to the whole. It contributed largely toward a well-ordered and very happy beginning of the school year.

The glorious autumn weather has made possible many parties out-of-doors. In addition to the usual initiation to the two athletic teams there had been a Freshman picnic, a French class picnic, a hayride, the Hallowe'en Party, and the Senior weekend at Mammoth Cave. The annual Play Day was held November 8. The hockey team and members of the Kentucky Home School in Louisville visited us and two teams made up of girls from both the schools played a match game. We look forward to this day from year to year and all enjoy it. On All Saints' Day there was a sung Mass with torches and incense and that evening an informal dance in the gymnasium.

Election night the convent was enlivened by the more ardent sisters availing themselves of the permission to sit up late, fortified with brownies and apples, and listen to the returns, and November 8 we celebrated the seventh anniversary of the Order of St. Helena. In those seven years our original number of nine has increased to fourteen.

For both the convent and the school the two outstanding occasions have been the visits of Bishop Yashiro, the Presiding Bishop of Japan, and of Father Kroll. Early in October the Bishop came to the convent for Vespers, dined at the school, and talked to the children in the chapel. After dinner we held an informal discussion in the living room. When we were told we might ask questions, the possessor of a small hand wanted to know if he could yo-yo? He said, no, but he plays baseball, first base. In spite of his not being able to yo-yo, and of our not being able to speak Japanese, we all recognized him as a strong spiritual and intellectual force and a most gracious Japanese gentleman whom it was a privilege to meet.

November ended happily with a visit from Father Kroll who came the 21st and remained through Thanksgiving.

Notes

Father Superior conducted the meditation at the annual pre-Advent conference of the Oblates of Mount Calvary, New York City; preached at Christ Church, West Haven, Connecticut.

Father Kroll gave a talk on the work of the Liberian Mission at Saint Mary's Church, Cold Spring, New York; visited

the convents at Helmetta, New Jersey, and Versailles, Kentucky.

Father Hawkins conducted a quiet day for clergy at Saint Mark's Church, Mendham, New Jersey; held a quiet day at Grace Church, Millbrook, New York.

Brother Bicknell preached at Saint John's Church, Camden, New Jersey; conducted a mission for young people at Grace Church, Newark, New Jersey.

Father Packard preached at Holy Cross Church, Dallas; conducted a teaching mission at Saint Matthew's Church, Athens; preached at All Saints' Church, Austin, all in Texas; preached at Grace Church, Mohawk, New York.

Brother Sydney gave a talk on the Liberian Mission at the Church of Saint Mary

the Virgin, New York City; spoke on the Liberian Work at the Canterbury Club of Washington College, Chestertown, Maryland.

Father Gunn conducted missions at Saint Paul's Church, Edenton, North Carolina and Grace Church, Newark, New Jersey.

Father Stevens conducted a mission with Father Spencer at Grace and Saint Peter's Church, Baltimore, Maryland. After the first of November Father Stevens will be stationed at St. Andrew's, Tennessee.

Father Gill spoke at the men's club of Trinity Church, Saugerties, New York.

Intercessions

Please join us in praying for:—

Father Superior leaving for his visitation to Saint Andrew's, Tennessee, December 10.

Father Packard conducting a school of prayer at Christ Church, West Haven, Connecticut, December 7-11; conducting the pre-Christmas retreat for our community on December 21.

Father Adams conducting a retreat for the deaconesses at Saint Clare's House, Reservoir, New York, December 12-14.

Father Gill preaching at Trinity Church, Watervliet, New York, December 14.

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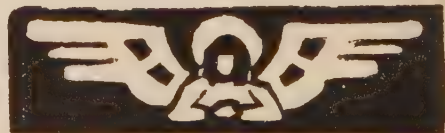
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CHRISTMAS

When Jesus Christ is born today
And seeks a place where He may stay,
A place where love of Him means more
Than earthly treasures, locked door,
A place where He may rest His feet
So weary searching for your street,
A place where He may rest His arm
So tired protecting you from harm,
A place where He may rest His Head,
Oh—may He not pass by. Instead
May He a place find in your heart,
And to you Christmas joy impart.

—M. E. Perrin



An Ordo of Worship and Intercession

December 1952 - January 1953

- 2) Tuesday V Mass of Advent iii col 2) Advent i 3) of St Mary—for the ill and suffering
- 7) Ember Wednesday V Proper Mass col 2) Advent i 3) of St Mary—for the increase of the ministry
- 3) Thursday V Mass as on December 16—for the Servants of Christ the King
- 9) Ember Friday V Proper Mass col 2) Advent i 3) of St Mary—for the American Church Union
- 0) Ember Saturday V Mass a) Ember Day col 2) Vigil of St Thomas 3) Advent i LG Vigil or b) of the Vigil col 2) Ember Day 3) Advent i LG Ember—for the Oblates of Mount Calvary
- 1) 4th Sunday in Advent Semidouble V col 2) Advent i 3) of St Mary cr pref of Trinity—for the conversion of sinners
- 2) St Thomas Ap Double II Cl R gl col 2) Advent i cr pref of Apostles—for all in doubt and perplexity
- 3) Tuesday V Mass of Advent iv col 2) Advent i 3) of St Mary—for the Confraternity of the Love of God
- 4) Christmas Eve V col 2) Advent i—for the spirit of humility
- 5) Christmas Day Double I Cl W gl cr pref of Christmas till Epiphany unless otherwise directed in 3d Mass LG of Epiphany—thanksgiving for the Incarnation
- 6) St Stephen Deacon M Double II Cl R gl col 2) Christmas cr—for the deacons of the Church
- 7) St John Ap Ev Double II Cl W gl col 2) Christmas cr—for the Society of Saint John the Evangelist
- 8) Holy Innocents R Double II Cl gl col 2) Christmas cr—for children in institutions
- 9) St Thomas of Canterbury BM Double R gl col 2) Christmas cr—for the Priests Associate
- 0) Within the Octave Semidouble W Mass of Sunday after Christmas col 2) Christmas cr—for the Seminarians Associate
- 1) St Silvester BC Double W gl col 2) Christmas cr—for the bishops of the Church
- January 1 Circumcision of Christ Double II Cl W gl col 2) Christmas—for renewed dedication to God
- 2) Octave of St Stephen Simple R gl col 2) of St Mary 3) for the Church or Bishop—for the Community of the Holy Name
- 3) Octave of St John Simple W gl col 2) of St Mary 3) for the Church or Bishop pref of Apostles—for Saint Andrew's School
- 4) 2nd Sunday after Christmas Semidouble W gl col 2) Holy Name 3) Holy Innocents cr—for the Order of Saint Helena
- 5) Eve of the Epiphany Semidouble W gl col 2) of St Mary 3) for the Church or Bishop—for the peace of the world
- 6) Epiphany Double I Cl W gl cr pref of Epiphany through the Octave—for the Liberian Mission
- 7) Within the Octave Semidouble W gl col 2) of St Mary 3) for the Church or Bishop cr—for Christian family life
- 8) Within the Octave Semidouble W Mass as on January 7—for Mount Calvary Monastery
- 9) Within the Octave Semidouble W Mass as on January 7—for the Holy Cross Press
- 0) Within the Octave Semidouble W gl col 2) St Paul the First Hermit (3) of St Mary cr—for the persecuted
- 1) 1st Sunday after Epiphany Semidouble W gl col 2) Epiphany cr—for parents, guardians, and children
- 2) Within the Octave Semidouble W Mass as on January 7—for the chaplains in the armed services
- 3) Octave of the Epiphany Gr Double W gl cr—for the Confraternity of the Christian Life
- 4) St Hilary BCD Double W gl cr—for the theologians of the Church
- 5) St Maurus Ab Simple W gl col 2) of St Mary 3) for the Church or Bishop—for vestrymen
- 6) Friday G Mass of Epiphany i col 2) of St Mary 3) for the faithful departed 4) for the Church or Bishop—for the faithful departed

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Father Drake's Page . . .

All Souls . . .

This is being written on a dark, rainy morning, and the rain is most welcome after weeks of dry weather. Have just come from the Chapel where a Solemn Requiem was offered on behalf of all the faithful departed. The Deacon of the mass read a long list of names—members of the Order, Benefactors, Oblates of Mount Calvary, Priests' Associate, and of our other Associates. What a great privilege it is to pray for our loved ones and to know that we are united to them in the one, true, pure, immortal Sacrifice.

"Don't Speak of Death" . . .

How often we hear that phrase when in the course of conversation the subject is brought up. "Let's talk about something cheerful" is the usual remark which changes the subject. Manifestly, speaking of death *can* be gloomy, but not for the Christian who believes, and *makes operative* his belief, in the communion of saints. It is difficult to understand how anyone can object to prayers for the dead.

Anglo-Franciscan Kalendar . . .

This attractive, and very handy little pocket-size booklet is published by The Grace Dieu Press, Maryhill, Mount Sinai, L. I., N. Y., and can be ordered direct. I believe it sells at 15c per copy, but why not just send the good Sisters \$1. and ask them to send you a few copies?

"Those Awful Vows!" . . .

Scene: Holy Cross Booth at General Convention. Cast of characters: A lady, and a Brother. Lady: "Well, so you're a real monk? Oh, I suppose you men do good work—what with your school, and your Mission in Africa and all that, but what I *can't* understand is why you take those *awful* vows. Why, just suppose you were to fall in love—what on earth would you *do*? Here you go, taking a silly vow not to marry, and then you fall in love—what *would* you do?" The Brother speaks: "Well, madam, if I were not aspiring to be a Monk, the chances are I might marry. And if I mar-

ried, I'd take a vow binding me until death do part. If, after taking that vow, I fell in love with another woman, what would you suggest I do?" The lady: "Well, for gracious sakes, I never even *thought* of that!" Curtain.

Gift for Your Parish . . .

If you would like to give a really fine gift this Christmas, may we suggest a copy of either "The American Missal" or "The Anglican Missal" in the altar size? Both of these are advertised in this issue, and having seen the books, I can assure you that either one would make a magnificent gift.

A. C. U. . . .

This organization did a grand job at the General Convention, and I want to urge you to take out a membership. The A. C. U. is for you if you want to help defend the Catholic Faith. Write: The American Church Union, 347 Madison Ave., Suite 1303, New York 17, N. Y.

Alcoholism . . .

In commenting on the General Convention in the November issue, I intended to mention the Committee on Alcoholism appointed by the Presiding Bishop. This is definitely a forward step. Alcoholism has become a major health problem, and the care and treatment of alcoholics is a field in which the Church can play a major role. The finest and most successful work today is being done by Alcoholics Anonymous. There is no known cure for the disease of alcoholism, but it can be arrested, and Alcoholics Anonymous has done wonders for many "hopeless" cases.

Christmas . . .

In the nearly ten years that I have been here, I've spent but one Christmas at Holy Cross, and it was an unforgettably beautiful experience. Ordinarily, I am away helping out in some parish or Mission. Wherever I am, I will pray for you at mid-night Mass, and I wish you a very Blessed Christmas.

Cordially yours,

FR. DRAKE, Priest Associate

